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ABSTRACT

The British Columbia Social Studies program approaches the study of man-in-his-world from three perspectives: scientific; situational; and critically reflective knowing. Through each method, students are exposed to various interpretations of how the social world has been constructed. The program, however, emphasizes scientific knowledge. Through such an emphasis teachers and students are made dependent on one particular way of viewing the social world. Such dependence limits the possibilities for exploring their social environment. The extent to which the perspectives influence classroom presentations (passive vs. active, noncommittal vs. committal) stresses the importance of providing a balance of knowledge perspectives in the program. Research stresses the importance of incorporating alternate perspectives into social studies programs. A careful delineation of these alternatives within the British Columbia program would ensure that students have an opportunity to expand their perspectives and views of the social world around them. It is recommended that a full description of the perspectives incorporated into the British Columbia Social Studies program be carefully described in the curriculum guides.
(Author/MF)

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A CRITICAL APPROACH TO PROGRAM EVALUATION

IN THE B.C. SOCIAL STUDIES ASSESSMENT*

(with Addendum - Chart: "Three Orientations to Curriculum Inquiry" from T. Aoki, "Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key." In Phenomenological Description: Potential for Research in Art Education, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada).

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A CRITICAL APPROACH TO PROGRAM EVALUATION IN THE B.C. SOCIAL STUDIES ASSESSMENT

Social Studies programs can be developed from different perspectives of learning. These perspectives, selected by the program developer, become for the student different ways of interpreting man-in-his-world. Identification of multiple perspectives suggests that there are many possibilities within which program developers may construct a Social Studies curriculum. One such set of perspectives has been identified* and is described in the table below:

PERSPECTIVES OF KNOWING

TECHNICAL	The scientific method used for analysis Interest in prediction and control. Approach is objective, hence detached Observation is a basic technique Object under study is isolated from total environment
SITUATIONAL	Multiple approaches are used to examine the same problem Rules for understanding are constructed by those within the situation Active participation of those in the situation Empirical Interest in communication of meanings
CRITICALLY REFLECTIVE	Making conscious the unconscious Underlying assumptions or interests are examined in terms of ideological and political content Active participation Commitment and active involvement in social environment

*See J. Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests. Boston : Beacon Press, 1971. For curricular interpretations see M. Apple, "Scientific Interests and the Nature of Educational Institutions", in W. Pinar (ed.), Curriculum Theorizing : The Reconceptualists. Berkeley : McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1975; T. Aoki, "Theoretic Dimensions of Curriculum : Reflections from a Micro-perspective", in Canadian Journal of Education, 2 : 1 (1975).

Technical knowing is concerned with treating that which is being observed as an object to be analysed; situational knowing is concerned with the meaning which humans give to their lived experiences; critically reflective knowing is oriented towards making the unconscious conscious. Since a Social Studies program may be built around these different possibilities, it is important to discover if these approaches are present in the B.C. Social Studies program and, if present, to discern how deeply each is integrated within it. Rather than dividing the B.C. Social Studies curriculum into its constituent parts, namely Elementary, Secondary, Geography 12, and History 12, in this analysis Social Studies curriculum will be regarded as an entity. In this analysis there is no claim that we are examining Social Studies in action in the classroom; the analysis is restricted to the official B. C. Social Studies curriculum documents.*

TECHNICAL KNOWING

Technical knowing (or as it is commonly labelled, science) is perhaps a dominant way through which many of us in our culture are taught to approach our everyday world. Often when we describe this world, we are unaware that the language we use to describe it is based on a particular set of assumptions which influence or bias our interpretations. For example, we have often seen the scientific method described in our Social Studies curriculum: the Elementary Guide stresses the skills of planning, observing, collecting, recording, classifying, analysing, synthesizing, and interpreting (p. 5); the Secondary Guide stresses that these skills are necessary for mature geographic and historic understanding (p. 13); the Geography 12 Guide refers to the mathematical aspects of geography as a means for interpreting human experience (pp. 3, 5, 8); and the History 12 Guide compares the work of the scientist to that of the historian (p. 2).** The question that lingers is: How often have we stopped to think how the use of a particular perspective colours our perspective of man-in-his-world?

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*The four B. C. Social Studies documents are officially called:
- Elementary Social Studies, Years 1-7
- Secondary School Curriculum Guide, Social Studies, 1968. Social Studies 8, 9, 10, 11.
- Secondary School Curriculum Guide, Social Studies, 1970. Geography 12, (Interim Edition).
- Secondary School Curriculum Guide, History 12.

Henceforth these documents will be referred to in shortened form as:
- Elementary Guide
- Secondary Guide
- Geography 12 Guide
- History 12 Guide

**It must be noted that many historians do not consider themselves to be scientists. As Stern suggests there are many approaches to history. Stern, F., The Varieties of History from Voltaire to the Present. Meridian Books, New York, 1956.

An approach stressing hypothesis formation, observation, analysis and similar skills, establishes the framework of the Scientific orientation. Scientists often use this approach not only to study the physical world, but also to examine human beings in that world. In this approach the topic under study is viewed as being capable of becoming divorced from the direct influences of the researcher's personal opinion. In other words, whatever is being studied becomes objectified; it becomes an object to be viewed. The researcher acts as a detached observer and his analysis is concerned with dissecting the topic or, by analogy, with locating the various parts of a jigsaw puzzle. His interest is focussed on how the individual parts eventually go to make up the whole or how the individual parts are causally related. This detachment allows the natural scientist or social scientist who uses the objective method to label his findings 'neutral'. Without such a label, the legitimacy of conclusions would be questioned.

A careful examination of the British Columbia Social Studies program reveals that much of it is based upon the scientific perspective. The guides, as previously noted, emphasize the skills of science: planning, observation and collection, recording, classification, analysis, and similar skills (Elementary Guide, pp. 5 and 6). Through the application of this technical know-how students acquire an understanding of how the geographer or historian would apply the framework to the study of various social situations. These situations are outlined in the content segments of the various B.C. Curriculum Guides. That the program values the science based skills within the disciplines of history and geography is illustrated in the following:

> Like the scientist the historian has a special need for scholarly virtues of patience, objectivity, exactitude..., both face the difficult task of selecting the most relevant from a mass of data, of testing their hypotheses against evidence... (Secondary Guide, p. 8, and History Guide, p. 2);
>
> The empirical method underlies most geographical research, but a statistical and mathematical approach is being greatly expanded because of the increasing availability of high speed electronic computers (Secondary Guide, p. 5).

The last statement suggests tacit acceptance of the scientific value of attaching 'neutral' numbers to human experience as it manifests itself on the landscape. Problems of overpopulation, for example, are largely defined in terms of numerics rather than in terms of an on-going study of human meanings and human life-worlds.

Translated into classroom activities the use of statistics and scientific procedures encourages the student to detach himself from the social world which he is studying. He, in other words, acts much like a newspaper reporter describing an event.

At any moment he may detach himself from the scene which he is reporting and return home without necessarily becoming emotionally involved in the situation; he avoids experiencing meaningfully the on-going life space. Such a position thus suggests that the scientific attitude, as it is applied in the B.C. Social Studies curriculum, leads the student to become a detached observer, a person who at a moment's notice is able to separate himself from that which he is observing. No personal commitment to the events studied is required on the part of the student. Such an attitude is further reflected in several of the objectives or intent statements of the program. Two examples are cited:

> To cause students to acquire a body of knowledge (comprised mainly of basic concepts or principles and generalizations) about the functioning of human societies both past and present, both at home and abroad (Secondary Guide, p. 3).

> To cause students to develop some facility in using the methods of inquiry through which knowledge in the social domain is discovered and acquired (Secondary Guide, p. 3).

The position is taken that the teacher is going to 'cause' the student to do something. The student is, therefore, viewed as the receiver of information who has little or no control over what will be done to him. It should further be noted that a technical stance is also taken towards knowledge. The assumption, for example, is made that knowing may be divided into basic concepts, principles and generalizations (Elementary Guide, p. 2, and Secondary Guide, p. 3). In a sense, then, the boundaries of what the student will experience in the classroom are carefully defined before he arrives at school. In a scientific setting the student's involvement in his own life world is largely ignored.

This section has pointed to those portions of the Social Studies that depend on the perspective of knowing which we term scientific or technical. Reliance on this perspective is carried over into the classroom, determining the type of Social Studies program that is offered. The scientific view of man, for example, is based upon a set of assumptions about the nature of social interactions, these in turn requiring a particular attitude on the part of the student, mainly that he remain a detached, neutral observer. While the B.C. Social Studies program does make extensive use of scientific knowledge, it must also be pointed out that it does rely to some extent on other perspectives of knowing.

SITUATIONAL KNOWING

Understanding the meaning which students or teachers or other persons give to their lived experiences with others is the concern of situational knowing. People in their experiences are constantly involved in the on-going construction of their personal

worlds which they perceive as being real. Indeed, we often forget that our meanings of social situations are not necessarily the same as others, for as people and events move together, there are many ways in which the events may be interpreted.* People, in other words, are continually interpreting the events that they experience and these interpretations differ from individual to individual, from student to student, from teacher to teacher. Critical are two characteristics of situational knowing: first, human beings give personal meaning to each situation in which they are involved, and second, others will interpret the same event in different ways. How each person constructs his worlds and how he interprets them is a question which begins to involve us in the situational knowing of the classroom.

In situational knowing, initially activities may be centered around clarification. A student may, for example, become involved in examining, through some social issue, how his values beliefs, attitudes and knowledge have influenced his understanding of the issue. In turn, he may clarify how his particular understandings relate to others' or society's reflections of the problem or concern.

Major differences exist between this view of knowing and scientific knowing. While scientific knowing is concerned with external or outwardly visible social interactions (i.e., those behaviors that may be defined through detached observation), situational knowing is involved in defining the situation he is part of and which he is constructing. Methodologically, this means that a topic studied by a class must be judged to be an activity worth the students' while to become involved in it. Further, the commitment to the particular perspective which the student takes within the situation must be considered. In situctional knowing, students are thus involved in exploring the social world as a unity rather than isolating particular phenomena and then dissecting them.

An example of the application of situational knowing in the Social Studies program is found in the statement of intents for the Secondary curriculum: "to provide a forum in which students may learn to deal with value questions in an intellectually honest way" (Secondary Guide, p. 3). Here, there is express consideration given to the student's own being-in-a-situation. That the students may hold differing social values and political perspectives within the same classroom environment is explicitly acknowledged. This suggests, too, that the quality of the student-teacher interaction in the classroom may be be different from that in which scientific knowing predominates.

In situational knowing students are not viewed as people to whom teachers must transmit knowledge, although that may be embodied, but rather as people with whom knowledge may be mutually

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*See A. Schutz, Collected Papers I. The Hague : Martinus Nijhoff, 1973, p. 207.

interpreted and shared (Elementary Guide, p. 4). In the previous section on scientific knowing, we noted that the teacher was to 'cause' students to learn knowledge. However, when we are dealing with differing personal situations, as the Elementary Guide points out, the teacher's role is altered. It is to "help children develop values" through the use of a procedure that may be interpreted as allowing students to define their personal situations (Elementary Guide, p. 6). Through interaction students develop an understanding of how their fellow students, and ultimately our society, perceive particular social issues. When application of this type of knowing is extended to the classroom, we may visualize an environment where students openly discuss and research issues from many perspectives, that is from the multiple possibilities that are implicit in the knowledge, values, beliefs and attitudes interwoven within the students' everyday lives.

Situational definitions also involve the student in gaining a perspective of history and geography from the present environment. History, for example, is not viewed as merely 'looking back'. Rather, students and teachers must be aware that each incident has its basis in the originality of the actual experience in which our awareness of the event is rooted. As students and teachers study each event there must be an awareness that it is linked to ourselves through an intimate alliance of historical self-knowledge, historical remembrance and historical research (Kaufman, p. 167). The situation is defined in terms of our own personal experience and our concept of how this awareness is linked to the historical past. In practice an example of such historical activity would be a study of the concept of work as it has developed in pioneer and early 20th century Canada. The empirical validity of such activities is established through constant reference to the knowledge and experience of others, both within and outside the classroom.

That the program gives tacit support to the situational approach to knowing is suggested in several of the statements: "Through contrast and analogy, the child's perspective for viewing his own family is broadened" (Elementary Guide, p. 11); "Each culture tends to view its physical habitat differently" (Secondary Guide, p. 6); "History can give us perspective..." (Secondary Guide, p. 11).

In summary, this section has pointed to those portions of the Social Studies program where some aspects of situational knowing have been included by the program developers. These sections are, however, seldom clearly identified for the teachers who must interpret the curriculum in their day-to-day setting. The situational perspective is based on the assumption that the meaning attributed to any one given activity may be interpreted in many different ways by the persons involved. Clearly recognition is given to the linkages developed between students, teachers, and the social issues of which they know are significant to them.

CRITICALLY REFLECTIVE KNOWING

Critically reflective knowing is concerned with the unconscious world that surrounds the meaning we give to each situation. Each action that we perform, each statement we make, and each value we hold, is based on some tacit assumptions which we make about the social world. Reflective knowing is oriented towards making these tacit assumptions conscious. To put it in another way, reflective knowing is oriented towards making the unconscious conscious.

The B.C. Social Studies program places some emphasis on this type of thought. In discussing history, for example, the program states "with all academic subjects, (it shares) the responsibility of instilling in people habits of critical thought" (Secondary Guide, p. 8). The Elementary program places value on this perspective when it states that one of the concerns of evaluation is "the development of critical thought, feelings, attitudes" (Elementary Guide, p. 7). In addition "the program offers materials and experiences that encourage the child to examine critically, and perhaps modify, his point of view (Elementary Guide, p. 4).

Further support of critical knowing is to be found in the evaluation section of the Secondary Guide when it is stated that the Social Studies should provide the student with the opportunity and skills of "sizing up the value of what the school offers to him" (Secondary Guide, p. 17). Such a statement encourages careful study of the underlying assumptions upon which the school system is based and of the underlying assumptions to which the student himself subscribes. A teacher and his students could consider the controlling ideological principles upon which the school system is founded. Within the unit they might, for example, study the labelling practices used by the school. Such a study would aid the participants in comprehending the meaning which is attached to their schooling by specific segments of the society. In any case, the participants in the program are encouraged to examine the ideas which make up our everyday lives and consider the political or ideological motives which are embedded in our every social action.

Critically reflective knowing demands the active involvement of both teachers and students in their ongoing social situation. Prescriptive intents (behavioral objectives for instance) serve little purpose in a classroom environment engaged in critically reflective activities. Rather, reflective activities themselves reveal to the participants the intent as the program progresses. Students who are engaged in a study of labour unions and their role in Canadian history will, for example, construct their intents as the project begins to unfold in their minds. The objectives are designed to fit the program as opposed to the program being designed to fit the objectives. The B.C. Social Studies program designers recognized such possibilities

when they stated: "It is possible to state objectives in a number of different ways and in the final analysis it is the individual professional teacher who must interpret printed statements and translate them into action" (Secondary Guide, p. 3). Such a Social Studies orientation, in addition, involves social action of some type or another, stopping a road project, helping in a community project, or similar activities. Commitment becomes a strong force within such a unit. Students and teachers must be willing to participate directly in the social world as it exists beyond the walls of the classroom. Learning under such conditions thus becomes a sharing of ideas, knowledge and actions as they are considered in terms of their ideological background.

History 12 perhaps best legitimizes the critically reflective approach in the classroom when the program guide states: "The purpose of studying history is to create doubt. There are few facts, incidents, developments in the story of man whose meaning can be taken for granted. There are no interpretations which can claim final validity" (History 12 Guide, p. 12).

CONCLUSION

The British Columbia Social Studies program approaches the study of man-in-his-world from these three different perspectives: scientific, situational and critically reflective knowing. Through each of these, students are exposed to various interpretations of how the social world has been constructed. The program, however, does not provide a balance between these perspectives; rather it emphasizes scientific knowledge. Through such an emphasis teachers and students are made dependent on one particular way of viewing the social world. Such dependence limits the possibilities which the participants have available for exploring their social environment. The extent to which the perspectives influence classroom presentations (passive vs. active, non-committal vs. committal) stresses the importance of providing a balance of knowledge perspectives in the program.

The work of Apple (1975), Shaver (1977), van Manen (1976) and Aoki (1977) all stress the importance of incorporating alternate perspectives into Social Studies programs. A careful delineation of these alternatives within the British Columbia program would ensure that students have an opportunity to expand their horizonal views of the social world around them. To aid teachers in moving towards consideration of perspectives, it is recommended that a full description of the perspectives incorporated into the British Columbia Social Studies program be carefully described in the Curriculum Guides. Students and teachers are entitled to a full explanation of the curriculum developers' knowing stance. The curriculum developers' perspective towards the social world should not, in other words, be hidden from users of the curriculum.

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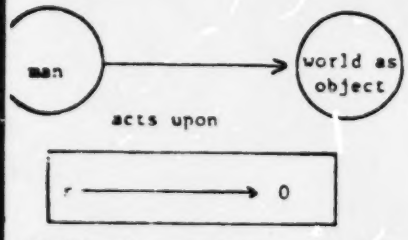
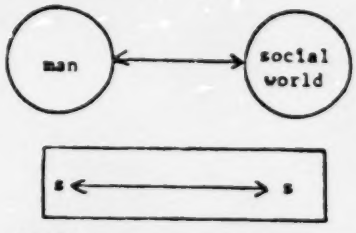
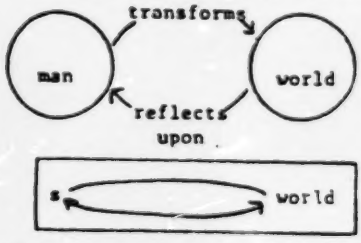
THREE ORIENTATIONS TO CURRICULUM INQUIRY

(T.Aoki)

Addendum

"Man experiences three root activities: WORK, COMMUNICATION and REFLECTION. These activities yeld three forms of knowledge: NOMOLOGICAL, SITUATIONAL INTERPRETATIVE, and CRITICAL."

EMPIRICAL-ANALYTIC (Technical) ORIENTATION	SITUATIONAL INTERPRETATIVE ORIENTATION	CRITICAL ORIENTATION
Root Activity: Intellectual and technical WORK (relating man to natural world).	Root Activity: COMMUNICATION (relating man to social world).	Root Activity: REFLECTION (relating man to self and social world).
Interest: in intellectual and technical control of world. Interest also in efficiency, certainly and predictability.	Interest: in experientially meaningful, authentic intersubjective understanding (in terms of meanings to actors).	Interest: in improving human condition by rendering transparent tacit assumptions and hidden assumptions and by initiating a process of transformation designed to liberate man.
Knowledge Form: Nomological knowledge (facts, generalizations, cause and effect laws, theories).	Knowledge Form: Situational knowledge. Knowing of structure of interpretative meanings.	Knowledge Form: Normative knowledge. Knowledge of thought and action to improve humanness and human/social condition.
Understanding is in terms of facts, etc.	Understanding is in terms of meanings people give to situations.	Understanding is in terms of reflection.
Knowing: empirical knowing.	Knowing: giving meaning.	Knowing: critical knowing that combines reflection and action.
Explaining: giving causal, functional or hypothetico-deductive reasons.	Explaining: striking a resonant chord by clarifying motives, common meanings and authentic experiences.	Explaining: tracing to underlying unreflected aspects to call for action.
Man/world relationship "man and world" 	Man/world relationship "man-in-his-social-world" 	Man/world relationship "man-in-his-world,with his world" 
Reality is out there. Life in this world can be explained with certainty, predictability.	Reality is intersubjectively constituted Life is a mystery	Reality is in praxis (thought and action). Life can be improved.
Theoretical Studies Behavioural Theory Systems Theory Cybernetics Structural Functionalism	Theoretical Studies Phenomenology Sociology of knowledge Ethnomethodology Linguistic Analysis Hermeneutics	Theoretical Studies Critical Theory Critical Social Theory Psychoanalysis
Some Scholars Descartes (I think; therefore I am). Locke Skinner Vienna Scholars	Some Scholars Schutz, Berger and Luckman Garfinkel, Goffman, Husserl (To the things themselves) Spiegelberg, Cicourel Palmer, Hirsch	Some Scholars Gouldner, Adorno Wellmer, Marcuse Haberman Frankfurt Scholars Utrecht Scholars Paulo Freire
Evaluation (Ends-Means) Achievement oriented Goal Based Evaluation Criterion Referenced Evaluation Cost Benefit Evaluation	Evaluation (Situational Interpretative) Phenomenological Interpretative Evaluation	Evaluation (Critical) Discovering Underlying Assumptions, interests, values, motives, perspectives, root metaphors and implications for action to improve human condition. Uncovering ideologies.

(from T. Aoki, "Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key", in J. Victoria and E.J. Sacca, Phenomenological Description: Potential for Research in Art Educatio Montreal: Concordia University, 1978.)